

July 30, 1975

XX

You may recall that at the beginning of this summer I stated that I might cease publication of BI rather than go through various transportation hassles when returning to school. This summer I've also found myself spending too much time on Dip to the detriment of my preparation for preliminary exams in September. Consequently, rather than try to do another issue in August just before I go back, this is the last issue of BI. The games will be finished by carbon copy letter, with sub fees of players being converted to a 10¢ fee per move; any subscribers with funds left over after this issue (which will count as two or three, depending on how long it is) will receive refunds. I don't trade for many zines, and I won't subscribe to most of those; I may try working out some arrangement with a few for writing a column.

The most unfortunate thing about a last issue, from my point of view, is that those persons spoken of herein will not have a chance to defend themselves. There is nothing I can do about that, really, but I will make this offer: if you wish to send something to the people who receive this issue disagreeing with what I've said, I'll make the mailing list available to you. In the past I have always given people the opportunity to react to what is said in BI, in print, but it would be more than I care to do to permit this opportunity in the normal form this time, since it would require publication of more issues.

Lest anyone be misled, I am in no sense "dropping out" of the hobby nor even gaffiating. I will be relatively quiet the next few months because of prelims, but the demise of BI with its publishing chores (GMing by carbon copy is much less time-consuming) gives me more time for other things.

My variant package has been a casualty of sorts this summer. All the games are done (rewriting needed) but I won't have time to get the printing done, along with drawing the maps, until October. At DipCon I'll have a copy of those parts which are done.

A Letter To Diplomacy World

I wrote the following in late May or early June for publication in DW. When Walt said that he had decided, partly as a result of the letter itself, not to publish it in DW, I said that I would print it in BI and asked for his reply. I think hobbyists ought to know what the policy of the GRI zine is, one way or another, since it affects the hobby as a whole.

Dear Walt,

I am disappointed that a zine which is owned by Games Research Inc. and which therefore one would expect to be objective, factual, and representative for the entire hobby rather than for one part of it, includes material which can only be described as emotional, biased, and vindictive. I refer to the supposedly humorous piece "TDS" in Volume 1 #6 and to Rod Walker's remarks in his "Averaged Calhamer Point Count" in the latest issue. ((which was 2-1))

Diplomacy World has been criticized (though not by me) for lack of humorous articles. Without going into the merits of articles of this type, I want to point out that there are two types of "humor". The first is the laugh at someone, the second the laugh with someone or at a situation rather than a person. Often the differentiating factor is not in the actual words themselves, but in the manner in which they are

delivered, or, to whom they are delivered. We can curse our friends and laugh as we do so, but if we do this to a stranger or to someone we disagree with, the consequences can be undesirable. In the case of the TDS article, someone writing with the style of Rod Walker is making fun of the Diplomacy Association (TDA) and of John Beshara. If the writer was a friend, if relations between TDA and Beshara on the one hand and Diplomacy World on the other were close, then this piece might be truly funny in the sense that no one would be hurt. But this is obviously not the case. Instead, this piece was an emotional weapon, not humorous in the least except insofar as it appealed to the sadistic side of the reader.

Walker's article refers to "the so-called 'Diplomacy Association'" as though it were a disease. He speaks of TDA "typically" stealing ideas. How can he criticize TDA for preferring a 7 game limit to a 3 game limit? What is artificial about it? What you choose is purely a matter of personal preference, and the implication that there is something malicious in choosing the higher limit does no service to anyone. No rating seems to be perfectly selective in what games it rates, and there have in the past been considerable differences in the games rated list for each rating. I can name at least two games (from an SICL tournament) not rated by other systems because second-hand, inaccurate, inadequate information from a novice player/gamesmaster was accepted rather than consult players who had participated in the games from the start. TDA rated these two games plus four others that probably should not have been rated; but at least TDA asked about the situation in order to determine what had occurred. Also I notice at least two people listed (Dr. Miller and B. Ver Ploeg) who have been inactive. I suppose it possible that they are again active, but I strongly doubt it. While Walker was complaining about inaccuracies, why didn't he point out that he included inactive players, not just "all active players", meeting the criteria of his point one?

While opinions differ regarding the contributions of TDA and of John Beshara to the hobby, there are several people who clearly feel that Beshara is an important contributor (he was regarded as ninth most important in the recent NADP Survey) and there are a number of people who are members of TDA (10 listed TDA membership in the first NADPS). Is it the place of Diplomacy World to take one side in this disagreement? If TDA or Beshara is clearly inimical to the hobby, then perhaps such action would be justified--but only through an objective, measured article which completely explained circumstances, not through back-handed sniping.

I point out to readers that I am not a TDA member and do not plan to become one, but I am an IDA officer. Walt may now regret that he once told me that he thought me the most objective person in the hobby. I have my personal opinions of TDA and of John Beshara, but they do not belong here. A truly hobby-wide zine must maintain objectivity (which does not necessarily mean neutrality). Walker and Beshara have been emotionally, vehemently antagonistic on and off since before TDA (and IDA) existed. If strong words are to be said against TDA, or John Beshara, or any other group or individual, they ought to be said by someone far less subjective about the subject than Rod Walker.

Sincerely,

/signed/ Lewis Pulsipher

Here is Walt's comment:

"Although I can't find the copy of the letter you sent me complaining about the anti-Beshara comments Rod Walker has made in DW, I will try to comment on it from memory. First of all let me say that this sort of thing will not occur again in the future. Although it has been my policy not to censor articles in DW, in this case I have decided that it is unfortunately necessary to maintain DW's role as a hobby-wide magazine. This is not to say that I approve of John Beshara's activities in the hobby. Far from it. However, I agree with you that if Beshara's activities are inimical to the hobby, he should be exposed in an above-the-board fashion. For the moment, I don't feel that DW is the place for this, but in response to Doug Beyerlein's letter in Bruce Schliekbernd's Poictesme #16, I have written a letter recounting my experiences with John Beshara that will probably appear in Poictesme #18. As you will see from it, I do feel that Beshara exerts a negative influence on the Diplomacy hobby, but DW is probably not the best place to express these views at this time. This is in the interest of trying to minimize feuding in the hobby."

LP here again. I wonder if Walt subscribes to the idea that anything said in a press release doesn't count in the real world. At any rate, I was disappointed to find that in an article by Rod Walker in DW 2-2, in which he starts writing a press release, the villain is none other than "Johann Beshdud". You have to be pretty slow on the uptake not to recognize the target. If the villain were, say, Wilt Buchdud I doubt that anyone would mind, since Walker and Walt are friends. But since Beshara and Walker are not, I think Walt ought to make Walker change the name of his villain. This may seem picayune, but it is a matter of principal and of what could be done later in Walker's little series. Unfortunately I didn't read Walker's article soon enough to give Walt a chance to comment about that. The reason I couldn't send Walt another copy of the letter, by the way, is that I had only one which was very lightly typed, so that I had a great deal of trouble as it was reading it for the above typing (in fact, I know I had to change one sentence I couldn't read).

Another Letter

This is the text of a letter I sent to a few zines recently, asking them to print it. It would be pretty stupid not for me to print it here!

Recently I was asked by a small (I suppose), heretofore unpublished DIPLOMACY organization to act as mail drop for them (they choose, for reasons which will be made obvious, not to reveal themselves completely). I am not one to hinder worthy (or even unworthy) groups--there are so many that each needs every bit of attention it can get--so I agreed. I was asked to send the following statement (which I have edited) to some well-known Dipzines for publication:

SMOF Now Accepting Members

The Secret Masters of Fandom (SMOF, pronounced smoff) are searching for energetic new blood to help in the arduous task of organizing all worthy projects which go on in Dippydom without seeming to. SMOF is forced to adopt contemporary methods to keep up with the growth of hobby activity--hence this announcement. SMOF is the oldest club in DIPLOMACY fandom. We operate in the most democratic manner. Each candidate can become a member only by 2/3 vote of the present SMOFs. Moreover, only the Chief Secret Master of Fandom knows who the other SMOFs are, in order to prevent undue or unfair influence by one mem-

bar on another in votes. There is a written constitution which the Chief Secret Master of Fandom interprets. Among other things, this means that only the Chief Secret Master of Fandom or his designate decides which candidates are placed before the SMOFs for a membership vote. Since money should not be a criterion of ability or usefulness, SMOF charges no membership fee. SMOFs are expected to work hard, however. There is much going on in Fandom, and since the Secret Masters ultimately control virtually all worthwhile activities there is much we must do. Have you ever considered how difficult it is to influence someone without seeming to? Not everyone is an easy mark or potential puppet, you know. SMOFs must be masters at dissembling as well as jacks of all trades. Only the very best in the hobby can claim that they are among the Secret Masters of Fandom (though of course, as its first rule, SMOF requires that members never reveal such membership to anyone, or they'll never win another DIPLOMACY game by mail again (and not many PTF games, either)).

To apply for membership write our mail drop ((LP)); he will forward your message. Include a statement of why you think you can be a Secret Master. If you do not wish to have the go-between know who you are (we recommend it), enclose your message in an envelope with "SMOF" written on the front.

Pulsipher here again. I have never heard of the SMOFs, but I've often heard rumors of inexcusable goings on in this hobby. Who are the SMOF? I know only a general delivery address (and obvious pseudonym) for the Chief SMOF, which tells me nothing. At least, I assume it is the Chief SMOF. I have, however, seen proof that at least part of what the SMOFs say is true.

More Letters

From Jon Southard (28 June)

The latest DR arrived here today, and I was very impressed with the international structure that you envision. I think, however, that most highly placed people are making a mistake when it comes to non-English speaking peoples, that being the manner in which the language barrier is to be surmounted. I definitely think that some form of assistance should be given to the German and French hobbies (not, of course, the kind of blundering, heavy handed "assistance" that NA renders the British) in order to build the postal hobbies in those parts of the world. The results can only benefit us.

However, the answer is not to look for German postal Diplomacy players who speak English; let's look for NA/UK players who speak German. There are several reasons for this:

- 1) The NA and UK hobbies are organized. In the space of a few weeks, we could locate a fair number of players in this country and Britain who speak German and would be willing to act in at least a translating capacity.

- 2) The German structure will of course be less organized. We might look for a long time before we found someone who spoke English and was willing to take a leading role in German Dippy development (this might not be true in Switzerland, but it would be in Germany and Austria).

- 3) I think that they would be more likely to listen if addressed in a more polite manner, i.e., in their native tongue.

Any IPA (or, hopefully, IDF) attempts to contact with and establish the German-speaking postal hobby should benefit from past experience and

not make the same mistakes that have soured British-American relations. The first step is to implement the essentially "hands off" approach that you have advocated for international relations.

By the way, are you planning to investigate the abolishment of the Election Reform Committee? That was a mighty slick way for Birsan et. al. to get rid of some opposition.

((To take the last point first: the abolition of the ERC was a blow against "Birsan et al.". Some people sincerely thought that reform was needed, but my position from the first was that the election process WHEN FOLLOWED was adequate, but it was not followed. What good does it do to reform the process while condoning gross violations of the old process? If you can violate the old, why not violate the new if you feel like it? Birsan listed me as a member of the committee after I had specifically said I would not serve; I was on it only in his mind (he said I'd resigned!). I never have figured out why he put me on the committee against my prior expressed will. The comm itself did nothing--Steve Brooks was chairman, but the only communication of the comm, so far as I know, was from Birsan to the members. Brooks did nothing. Gil Neiger abolished the comm (I don't think Birsan is recognizing the abolition, but who knows) because he was sick of the messing around getting nowhere, I think. Gil is, most of the time, Birsan's strongest opponent. I suspect that since they live near each other they sometimes rub each other the wrong way while at other times Birsan can convince Neiger of things that the latter will change his mind about after more thought.

((Now as for contacting other fandoms: there are many more English speaking foreign players (proportionately) than there are foreign-speaking Americans. This is because many present foreign players learned from an English-language edition of the game because no foreign language edition existed. Also, European (at least western European) educational systems stress foreign languages more than our own. I can read German and French well enough to pass graduate school tests and even to read variant rules, but not enough really to use the language, and even to that extent I am an exception. On the other hand, a high proportion of western Europeans learn English because it is the international language of business, finance, etc. As it happens, there is a Swiss (Walter Luc Haas) on the IDA Council who began the first German-language DipZine and who publishes a huge wargaming zine (in English) called Europa. He is an indefatigable letter-writer among other things. The only all-French Dipzine I know of is published by a Frenchman who speaks English and began playing in English (scuse--British) zines. He used to sub to BI. In fact, BI has an Austrian subscriber, too.

((I also think you are much too optimistic about the likelihood of translators stepping forward. You don't find many volunteers even for a non-specialized project, let alone one as specialized as translation.

((The Federation scheme is not doing well. I fear too many people are looking only at the short-term, not the long-term problems. I have no time to push it now; perhaps when the British find that they aren't going to get any more representation on the Council (they have two now, in effect, and the opportunity to run for many offices, and yet the Council always has to worry about not offending the British whenever we consider any broad-based bill that might affect them), perhaps they'll look more favorably at Federation.))

From Fred Davis Jr (18 June)

Two comments on your report on NADPS #2, which I've only just now had time to read.

1. Under VARIANTS, you stated: "Variants have come a long way in North America since 1972, when Dick Vedder and I were the only people who really cared about them."

I must take exception. I invented ABSTRACTION in 1970 and ATLANTICA I in 1971. I began printing Bushwacker as a postal zine devoted exclusively to Variant games in March 1972. I've been very active in the variant field since 1969.

I believe it would also be fair to say that Rod Walker was still involved in the variant field until about August 1972. Accordingly, as I see it, there were four people who were quite active in the variant field in the calendar year 1972.

((I didn't say anything about being quite active, though. Of course there were many people playing and GMing variants, but how many of those cared, really, about what non-variant people thought about variants, how many were interested in any of the higher-level activities associated with variants in the same way activities are associated with standard games--that is, ratings, numbering systems, writing about the games, etc.? Only Dick and I. Rod offered to take the MN if no one else would take them, in late '71, but Don Miller asked me about it and I consented to take up the custodianship, in part because Walker already had the Boardman Numbers and was then (or perhaps it wasn't until soon after) beginning to falter in various ways. Dick collected statistics of games and maintained a rating system, while I did the MN and reviewed games in BI just as I do now in DW. When articles were being solicited even as late as 1973 for the first IDA Handbook, I had to protest the failure to include variants when I read an outline. Only Dick and I made any motions toward writing articles for the Handbook or anywhere else. And we did it (I did, anyway) because I wanted to show people that we were "just as good" as the standard game people. The primary purpose for the existence of the MN, as I saw it, was to show that variants were just as good as standard games--if they could have numbers, so should we.

((At any rate, I think that what I said was accurate. Dick and I were the only people at that time who were interested in variants outside of our personal designs and GMing; we were the only ones who really cared about what happened to the genre.))

2. You mention that 77% of postal Diplomacy players read science fiction. This goes to prove my thesis that most Dippy people are quite intelligent. No less an authority than Isaac Asimov has stated that the way to find the really bright boys in school is to find out which ones read science fiction avidly. Sci-fi has been found to be one of the few common bonds among most of the male members of Mensa. Incidentally, almost every regular Dippy player who decided to join Mensa qualified. The one party I know who missed failed to qualify by a single point. (Passing is an I.Q. of 130). So, I'm glad to see that your survey gives hard evidence of what I've instinctively felt to be true all along.

((Somehow I feel that you've got it backwards. I've heard Asimov's spiel, and I agree with it more or less (though I'm sure there are many, many exceptions). I think that if you asked people which group was more intelligent, based solely on knowing what the activity is

(Dippy or SF), more would peg the Dip-players as the more intelligent. That is partly because people often think of SF as horror stories, but on the other hand wargames in general are often thought of as kids stuff rather than as a chess-type thing. But basically, Dip-players are obviously using their heads while SF readers aren't necessarily doing so. Many people have suggested the links between intelligence, SF, and wargames. By the way, Fred, the hard core SF fans would groan to hear you talk of "sci-fi". That is considered the term used by those ignorant, "unwashed" people when they talk about SF. Not that it matters....))

YOUNGSTOWN VARIANT maps are being distributed free by THE DIPLOMACY ASSOCIATION'S Variants Committee. Members are:

Raymond E. Heuer, Variants Officer
192-42 Jamaica Av., Richmond Hill, NY 11418

Douglas Reif, Associate Variants Officer
67 Grosvenor Rd., Kenmore, NY 14223

Ferkin Doyle
1519 Naudain St., Philadelphia, PA 19146

Robert Sacks
15-F Tang Hall, 550 Memorial Dr., Cambridge, MA 02139

The maps are approximately 3 feet by 7 feet on one sheet of paper, and can be mounted on any board or wall. They are in three colors; land borders are black, sea borders are blue, and impassable areas are red. All the provinces, including the Off Board Boxes (OBB's) are large enough to fit normal DIPLOMACY units. The maps are easily adaptable to all YV versions except the Dick Veder versions requiring large additional map area in Africa (and these can be played if you wish to add that map area yourself). They are read for play of all versions using the original board. The maps are produced on a Calcomp 925/936 three pen offline plotter by Douglas Reif. Base data for this map are available from its creator to anyone who has access to plotter facilities.

Maps are limited to one per person and preference goes to active YV players and GM's. Additional maps will be distributed as they become available. Some people who are assisting in distribution as a service to the hobby include: Herb Barents, Chris Schleicher, Lewis Pulsipher, and Doug Ronson.

I have a couple points to add to the above. Since only straight lines can be used for computer plotting (unless you want to go to a terrific amount of trouble), the maps have a slightly schematic appearance with four, five, six, or more sides to a space forming a shape approximately like that of the original. Second, I recently discovered with Steve Langs' help that there is one error on the map. SPa and Timor ought to connect to each other--in other words, delete the impassable space there. This arises (according to Michel Faron's article) from an error Burt Laballe on some of his YV map printings. I can confirm this from the mimeo map I have from Rod Walker--the original printing. I think (at least, I know Walker had a mimeo before he had a ditto machine).

(OSLO, continued) "What happened to him, exactly?" asked Louis Pulse, who was from one of the American papers and had just got there (to Norway, that is).

Lee Cipher(The Daily Telegraph), replied, "He was so foolish as to accept Typhoid Mary's offer of a snack. As they were indeed prepared by her, he took typhoid."

"By the way, what was that error you made the other day?" (This to The Times.)

"I said 'incarcination,' meaning 'incarceration,'" came the reply. Then, almost aggressively, "Don't worry, it'll never happen again."

"Something just occurred to me," said Lee Cipher. "You remember that they said Typhoid Mary's method was to get a position in an eating establishment in the country to be occupied and thus give all who ate there typhoid? Well, this is an eating establishment and..."

"Don't worry," said The Times. "I have it on excellent authority that she has a job at the officer's commissary at the main camp of the Russian occupation force."

"Oh, No!" said Louis Pulse. "I ate there before I came here, and I must have touched everybody's food!"

"Everyone's except mine and The Daily Telegraph's," said The Times complacently.

"Wow, what a great story this will make," said Lee.

ROME: All is peaceful as we tend to our vineyards. The king proclaims a holiday and welcomes new visitors.

PARIS UGC: "When the Great GM in the Sky of the Sty (may he be cursed) chooses not to support the Council of the Gutter (forgot us he did!), the laymen of the Churches of the Gutter had no choice but to slay all the Council in a gesture of noconfidence," intoned His Honor Typhoid, of the Orthodox Church of the Sty, "and I was asked to be temporary Council until the Churches could decide whether to keep the Council in existence or dissolve it in the face of huge gains made by our armies in Germany lead by the peerless General Tetanus."

PARIS GP: The exchange of Holland for Munich followed by the crushing of the German fleet and their army in Kiel spells the end of the German dreams of world conquest. Another year should see French armies on Russian soil.

DOUBLE AGENTS, INC.: The Turks are dealing with the western alliances in an attempt to survive. The details say there will be a Turkist assault on Russia after the Austrians are destroyed. But other reports speak of massive aid promised to the Austrians from the French and Italians should they (the Austrians) survive 1904.

ROME: New elections announce that the new president is Enzo Stuarti. New internal reforms are under way which means reliability will be guaranteed.

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Edi Birsan, in Ide #7, proposed a "Novice Entrance Project" which essentially would be a reorganization of the GRI flyer (in the game) giving one post office box address for novices to write to. It is said this would be a more efficient means of getting people into the hobby and into games. Birsan also suggests that NEP be administered by an elected official and that it be "associated with the IDA". For the entire 1 1/2 page text see some zine that prints it (I don't know of any right now) or ask Edi Birsan, 35-35 75th St. Apt. 302, Jackson Hgts., NY 11372 for a copy. Birsan asked publishers for their opinions

in order to get a firmer idea of what would be acceptable and workable. As long as I was going to write this anyway, I decided to print it in BI to offer a written counterpoint prior to the discussion at DipCon.

I oppose the NEP, at least in its broadest sense, on these counts: 1) the "minor problems" are really major problems which must be solved, and which may not be soluble 2) I am opposed to any potential monopoly such as that which exists in Great Britain to the detriment of the hobby there 3) I am opposed to having the NEP take any part in actually placing players in games, because this would do more harm than good 4) I am opposed to affiliation of NEP with any organization in any way.

As a GM NEP would have no effect on me, even if I intended to open more games (I do not), they would be variants, and novices do not normally begin to play variants until they have some idea of what is going on in this hobby.

In my opinion (and recall that I am an IDA officer), IDA has consistently shown this year that it is a club not for all the hobby but for a part of it, and that the minorities are ignored; their needs and desires are not considered or, if they are, they are not considered worth bothering with. I would understand perfectly opposition to IDA participation for fear that those who support IDA, or those who are part of the group which founded and runs IDA, would receive preferential treatment. It is foolish and naive to believe that all opposition to IDA derives from some plot on the part of a few individuals, from a desire for ego-boo, or from any unworthy motive, although this may be true in some cases. At bottom, a large part of the struggle in the hobby is a struggle for control of novice sources, both of their playing and of their opinions. The current disagreements must be overcome through change and compromise from all sides, not from an arrangement which gives the "staff of power" (really only power in the minds of people who have lost their perspective) to one organization to the potential (and probable) detriment of others who are not supporters of that organization. (See Pete Birks' article in DW for how a system of single-novice-source can lead to domination of an entire country (Great Britain) by one organization (NCC).

The mechanical problems are very severe. First, there are those who would defend strongly the lump sum gamefee system. For example, Len Lakofka intended to recommend this system in the Publisher's Handbook he is editing. Yet the majority of GM's use a sub system or a sub plus fee system. No compromise between these systems is possible, so far as I can see; nor can we expect people to standardize their rates if only because the quality of the zine one gets along with the game varies so much. There are really three systems in effect, each quite different: lump sum, sub, and sub plus lump sum.

Another problem that ought to be considered is that many novices might not like getting placed in a game in a zine without having any control over which zine. A novice ought to look for a zine which seems to be something he'll enjoy reading as well as playing in, rather than being, in effect, told that he will play there. True, this problem may be overcome with some caution, but the solution is so involved that we might as well let novices choose zines for themselves rather than place them in zines.

Another, more serious problem, is at the heart of the matter: who decides which zines are worthy of getting novice games and which are not? The only method I can think of which would begin to satisfy people would be a vote of all gamesmasters, but even in that case I

can see vote trades and similar inducements being used. It is more or less true that right now Walt Buchanan decides who gets on the flyer, but GRI tries to make sure that no willing GM is omitted who can be considered reliable by any halfway common criterion. But can we use that for NEP? First, some people would object--many. Second, every failure of a zine which had received NEP games would directly reflect upon NEP. If NEP actually placed the games, it would be necessary for NEP to guarantee the games. This would require a much more extensive organization than is being proposed.

NEP might be a single place where novices could write to get current addresses. It is true, the present system is very slow and results in many outdated addresses (James Massar, I understand, is on the newly-distributed flyer although he has been out of publishing, and perhaps out of the hobby, for months). I got a letter from GRI in winter or spring of 1974 asking if I wanted to be on the next flyer. The flyer was checked in Chicago in August for what, I thought, would be the final draft. Just last month I got the first enquiries from that flyer, more than a year after I volunteered. Novice addresses obtained by the NEP would have to be free for publication in any zine. (I am distressed at the present tight attitude--how often does one see a "New Blood" listing nowadays?) NEP would have to be non-partisan with an elected chief, probably not an officer of any other organization and those who wished to have their names placed on the flyer in the old manner would have to take up the question with GRI, just as they have in the past. At least at first, until all could be sure that NEP would be non-partisan, it would be necessary to permit those who distrusted the system to get their names placed additionally on the flyer. There are too many problems with game placing--players getting put in zines they don't like, drop-out problems, gamefee problems--to try an NGC type thing here now.

Consequently I oppose any organization which attempts to do more than provide a clearing house (not an exclusive source) for address information--no game placing. I also oppose any NEP connection with any DIP org at present.

(By the way, how could you change directors without changing PO Box, unless you were fortunate enough to have a new director who lived very near the old one? Have all the mail routed through GRI?

I'm afraid that was not well-expressed, but it will have to do.

What Do You Think Of This?

The IDA Council recently passed the following bill. Since most people will probably never know more for certain about the project than what is expressed in the bill, I'd like to know what your reactions to it are.

75.58 (the bill number): The IDA Council establishes a committee on publisher/GM rating services to be chaired by Robert Correll with members to be appointed by the Council upon the recommendation of the chairman, to set up and implement a system of recording and publishing the performance record of all GM/publishers, on a scale reflecting reliability and indicating to what degree they are recommended. The Council may appoint r(sic) additional members to this committee at the request of the Chairman, on a voting basis. The Committee is to co-ordinate efforts between all regions by having at least one voting member of the committee a resident of a non North American region and that committee member shall be responsible for compiling all

statistics on GPs/publishers outside of the North American region and submitting them to the committee chairman for publication. The Chairman shall publish the listing, making it available to all publishers. The committee is to be a standing committee.

I see from a con listing in Speculum that some SF fans (it appears) are holding a Dungeons and Dragons convention! This will be Feb 27-29 in Oakland CA--write DunDraCon I, 386 Alcatraz, Oakland CA 94618.

Chuck Deehrer traced the WAR OF THE RING map on a sheet of paper, and made another to send to me while he was at it. Thanks, Chuck, I'll put it to good use.

The following is a letter from Robert Sacks, dated 8 June, 1975. I obtained permission to print it exactly as it is (except, as Robert pointed out, the original was hand written), and so it is.

Lewis:

I am cancelling our trade effective immediately. I am sure this will cause you no grief as you seem to regard my efforts with as little respect as you have taught me to regard yours.

Your opinionated disregard of almost everything is incompatible with the search for information that all conscientious persons must engage in. Your tendency to blackguard, to vilify, to double-deal, and to obstruct, from the beginning of every project, proposal, and activity, has finally turned the initial respect I had for you and tried to maintain into quite the opposite.

I suppose basically it comes down to the trait of honor--were I to continue to correspond I would have to sacrifice mine. Instead I will wait for you to cultivate one of your own.

/signed/ Robt Sacks

Excerpts from my reply, and an article bearing on this entire question, will be printed later in the issue (I hope).

Chip Charnley, 1545 Breton Road S.E., E. Grand Rapids, MICH 49506 and Bob Jousma are starting a D&D zine, Kranor-Rill, beginning Sept 1. It will be ditto-printed (they're borrowing Herb Barents' machine), 10-12 pages bi-monthly, \$2 per year.

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Back issues: These are third class prices, minimum third class order 50¢; if you want first class add 10¢ per 10 pages.

Hyborian Age Dip (4) 20¢, World War IV Dip (4) 10¢, 1776 Dip (10) 20¢, Aberration IV Dip (4) 5¢, Militarism II (game) (4) 5¢, World Diplomacy (12) 20¢, NADPS #1 results (5) 10¢, NADPS #2 results (18) 20¢, NADPS #1 survey form (2) 5¢, Diplomacy House Rules (4) 5¢, Logical Dip II (3) 10¢, Interstellar Dip III (5) 10¢, Blood and Iron #'s: 50, 26, 19, 3 (2¢) 5¢, 47, 45, 46, 41, 39, 5 (4¢) 5¢, 49, 48, 44, 43, 42, 33, (6¢) 10¢, 40 (Cities in Flight Dip, 6) 15¢, 24, 23 (4000AD variant), 30 (ID III), 29 (Logical II), 25 (Baseball, Escalated, Red Herring, Takeaway, Breakthrough Dip), 37/38, 32 (Mil II, Anglo-Saxomacy), 31 (Ser Opt I, Algernon) (10¢) 15¢, 22 (Aber IV), 28 (12¢) 15¢, 6 (WW IV), 21 (Anarchy V, VI, Air-Sea I) (8¢) 10¢, 1 (1), 5¢, Black Host's 1 and 2 (2¢), 5¢, Origins of WW II House Rules (4) 5¢, Backish of Ragnarok (20¢ for the bunch), Great Lakes Gamers Census (20¢) 35¢.

GIVE US A BREAK, EDI

The following is the first question on a "Presidential Poll of the Council" 7.4.75.

1. The tournament Rules Committee intends to go to Origins I and help run that Tournament's Diplomacy Section as an official act of the committee. Lew Pulsipher has strongly objected to this action.
 - a. Do you support the committee's action?.....yes.....no....
 - b. Do you feel the committee's action warrants removal of the President?.....yes.....no.....
 - c. Do you feel that the Committee should have waited three months for the Council to decide?.....yes.....no.....

Here is an example of our IDA President at his worst. This question is extremely unfair and biased; this is probably clear at one glance, but a little background may make it clear to those who do not see it immediately. I strongly objected NOT to having the TRC "officially" run or help run the ORIGINS I Diptourny. I objected to Birsan's declaration that he was going to do so, without so much as a "by your leave" from the Council--that is, he said he would do it and, as in other cases of the same type, he hoped that the Council would approve--but he obviously intended to do it, whether the Council approved or not. I think anyone who has read the IDA Constitution and the charge of the TRC would agree that it was beyond the committee's jurisdiction to declare that it would act in IDA's name in any tourney-running capacity. It would have been very simple to put the question to the Council, but Birsan seems to have lost his sense of proportion. Because some of the Council has complained about Birsan's favorite tactic, putting up a bill out of nowhere and asking for a vote without debate--important bills, not just a relatively simple OK such as this would have been--Birsan now uses the excuse that "the Council will debate it for three months" to take action unilaterally without regard for the Council. I'm sure that, if Birsan had put this question up to the Council (and he had plenty of time), no one would have complained about the suddenness, nor would anyone have voted against it. What is really unfair about the above question is that it is loaded by the phrase "waited three months". No one could say yes to that--even I didn't. But the fair alternative would have been to ask if the issue should have gone to a vote by the Council--which it should have--before the date of ORIGINS I--which it could have been.

Why is this important? It is the latest event in a constitutional struggle which is of the UTMOST importance to IDA's future, though few people (certainly not most Council members) realize it. The basic question is, what is necessary for IDA to become a truly hobby-wide organization (which it certainly is not now)? The rights of minorities must be considered and protected, clearly; they should not be exposed to what might be called the "tyranny of the majority" but which can more accurately be called the tyranny of those on top. In other words, unless something restrains the people on top from unfairly imposing on minorities, especially from taking out their petty dislikes and personality grudges on minorities, then IDA will never be accepted by minorities--and altogether, the "minorities" make up at least 75% of the hobby. If there is no brake on those on top, then minorities will be either 1) driven out of the hobby 2) driven into other clubs (we've seen much of this lately) 3) driven into apathy 4) driven to oppose all clubs. The revival of TDA and establishment

of other clubs, with or without national pretensions, is not a coincidence or accident, nor is it all due to malignance and maliciousness of certain individuals who have become whipping boys for the people who dominate IDA. At least in part, these other clubs provide a refuge for those who have discovered that IDA consistently ignores them and their concerns. If IDA continues as it has the past year and a half, the only way it will ever become the hobby-wide organization is through coercion.

What can be done to reverse this trend (and how did it happen)? First, we need a change of attitude. Too many people in official positions and hobby jobs fail to be objective, to get outside of themselves. Everything they do is in terms of personalities. They are short-sighted. The ad hominem argument is the one that most appeals to them. I hope to say more about this in "Chain Rattling" later on in this issue, and in my article on the "Future of Diplomacy Fandom" which will be printed in various places in a month or two. Second, IDA must establish a constitution that is followed that can counteract the tendencies of people "on top" to kick minorities around. The present IDA constitution, while a pretty wretched document all around (most first tries are--even the Articles of Confederation), is not insufficient to offer some protection. Unfortunately, the present Council and past Councils, and especially the President himself, are not paying attention to it.

Let me digress rather wildly here a minute. At present I am known in IDA, I would suppose, as someone who favors real democracy in IDA. I have about given up on that idea, however, after seeing how difficult it is to get people to go along with it and how difficult it can be, given a leader temperamentally unsuited for it, to get it to work through the mails. As those who have received BJ for some years know, I am not usually a proponent of democracy in wargaming. MGA is and always has been a dictatorship of 1-7 or 8 people. No one has ever complained about this, and it has seldom happened that anyone was hampered by any restriction set by the MGA Council. MGA did have a constitution, but there was a flaw in it, and we decided unanimously to abolish it. I think now that this was a mistake, because there is no brake on the MGA Board in case it wants to start sticking its nose into business it hasn't bothered with. The reasons I supported democracy in IDA were 1) it was already supposed to be democratic 2) it was already clear that the Council was ignoring the Constitution; hence, the only possible brake on them was "the mass of the people". I add to this a story I told Walt Bucharan while I visited him in January. I knew someone who was trying to explain why Bertrand Russell, after opposing communism so strongly for almost all his life, suddenly became a strong proponent of it. The explanation he devised was that Russell had finally decided that the only way he could convince people that communism was a poor system was for people to actually live under it. In one sense, I supported democracy in IDA with this in the back of my mind--that democracy must be given a real trial (it had not), and if it was found wanting, then IDA could throw off the somewhat hypocritical facade it carries and adopt a non-democratic form openly. I really had hoped, however, that dip-players, being older than wargamers, would manage where wargamers had failed. The turnouts in recent voting, the lack of interest of the "average member", and the difficulties in the Council have convinced me that democracy, in any significant sense of the word, is doomed in IDA. But while I was doing what I could to try out democracy, I also tried to uphold the constitution, and that brings me back to the end of the previous paragraph.

The IDA constitution has been consistently ignored for two reasons. First, deadass Councils haven't recognized, and usually haven't cared about, the importance of upholding the constitution; and as with any constitution, there is development and change in accordance with past practice. It has become customary for the Council to do whatever it pleases, and especially for the IDA President to do whatever he pleased, whether he had Council approval at the time or not. Second, the IDA President for the past 2 1/2 years has been Edi Birsan, who is temperamentally unsuited, it seems, to operate within the restrictions of a constitution. It could be said that in one sense he is of an authoritarian temperament, but this is only partly true; I think also that he lacks the necessary self-discipline to work within set boundaries of "power", or perhaps more accurately, he doesn't realize that such bounds are necessary. He has come to feel that it is his right to act first and expect the Council to rubber-stamp his action afterward. Last year the only time he was ever thwarted in his desires was when so few Council members bothered to vote on one of the major bills that not enough yes votes for passage could be obtained (even though all who voted cast yesses). Thus he feels that his position as President gives him some right to declare that the TRC would act officially for IDA, without any Council action, even though it's quite clear that neither a committee member nor the President himself has any such power, even though it's clear that for the good of IDA and of this hobby no one should have the power to speak unilaterally for IDA unless the Council has delegated such power to him (and then, it must be a power the Council itself has to give). Birsan's action in the Judicial Committee illustrate this most clearly. There was a dispute before the JudCom between Eric Verheiden (and TDA, depending on who was looking at it) on the one hand and Rod Walker (who is all too often identified with IDA) on the other, over a reprint of some material copyrighted by TDA. As chairman of the JudCom, Walker obviously should have disqualified himself from participating in the investigation; he should have appointed a temporary chairman for the case. He did not, perhaps because of the blind spot he has where TDA is concerned; perhaps he was feeling morally righteous. Whatever the reason, he stayed on, while the arguments waxed hot and heavy, obviously influenced by ad hominem considerations. (Some people, Birsan included, consider TDA-John Beshara (they do not make any significant distinction when they talk of the two) to be "inimical" to the hobby, and certainly to IDA.) (Too often, the case was seen as "IDA vs. TDA", with TDA not having much of a chance before an IDA committee!) One would assume that the committee members, if they were unhappy with Walker's actions, would first advise him privately to step down; if that failed, one would expect them to gain support from other JudCom members (this would actually be done at the same time), perhaps even writing a letter to Walker and asking other committee members to sign it and send it to the chairman. Then if this failed to convince Walker, the other committee members might be expected either to ask the Council to intervene or, in order to save time, take a vote among themselves as to whether Walker ought to be disqualified from considering the case. Instead, Birsan sent a dittoed letter to the JudCom members presenting new evidence in the case and asking for an immediate vote to resolve it! NEW evidence, and they were asked to vote without any time for debate. Birsan had no business calling for a vote in any case (though he maintains that any committee member can in such circumstances). I don't know how it looks to you people, but to me this not only indicates

Birsan's feeling that the IDA President can do what he pleases, it also was an attempt by Birsan to steal a march on those who opposed his view (which was that there was no case against Walker)--that is, against anyone who might support TDA--in order to bail out Walker and (in the eyes of those who think in such terms) to give IDA a "victory" over TDA. How else can it be explained? Birsan doesn't explain it. I took the time to ask him if he had written to Walker asking him to step down, or if he had written to other JudCom members about replacing Walker. I have received a reply to other things in that letter, but not to my questions.

Is this justice? If you are in a minority sometime, do you want to be treated this way? I know that I wouldn't (though nothing IDA can do can hurt me, given my interests and propensities). If the President is willing to act this way, if the Council condones such things, and such things as the election fiasco where the Constitution was completely ignored, where the rights of minorities were completely ignored, can IDA ever become an accepted hobby-wide organization? Hell, no.

There is a movement, temporarily derailed when it was shoved into a committee Birsan put to a vote without debate, but not dead, to ditch the old IDA Constitution and to write a new one. IDA's only real hope, in my view, is to devise a good constitution which admits that democracy will not work (though voting for officers, as little as that is, can be retained), just as some Council members say privately (for example, Walt Buchanan). Then this Constitution must be adhered to, the Council and the President must realize that every action they take must be taken with the idea that the entire hobby is watching to see whether everyone will be fairly treated (though this is not in fact the case at all times, of course).

This has been written off the top of my head, unfortunately.

Your IDA Council at Work (?)

A while before Rod Walker resigned he stated that he would list in Diplomacy Review the number of pages of comments/suggestions/etc. which each Council member had contributed to the Council Courier. Since Rod resigned, I assume that he has dropped this idea. I have taken it up, with results here adding the contributions since then to his count. I've also indicated what committees each person is on (underlined if chairman). I have not included non-North American members, replacements for those who resigned, those who resigned, and Birsan, who is ex officio a member of every committee and who, perforce, writes more in CC than anyone else, by far.

John Boyer--9--Calhamer Awards (CA), Variant,

Steve Brooks--4--Judicial, Election Reform, Constitutional Convention

Walt Buchanan--2½--None

Robert Correll--6--Novice, Zine Rating

Tom Hubbard--½(sic)--None

Ron Kelly--8½--None

Gil Neiger--15½--None

L. Pulsipher--24½--CA, Variant, DipCenSite, ConstCon

Notes--The Election Reform committee is inactive (in fact, Neiger declared it to be abolished for failure to report to DR). The only activity occurred when Birsan sent a communication to the members (since Brooks was inactive). (Note I have no objection to a committee member communicating directly with other comm members--I encourage it on my committee.) Calhamer Awards comm has been fitfully active (see

below). Variants committee lapsed on June 30. Constitutional Convention Committee has been inactive under two chairmen since it began, though Nick Ulanov assures me that it will return to (or begin) activity very soon. Walt Buchanan is chairman (and only member, other than Birsan) of the Finance comm by virtue of his office (VP/Treas.). Gil Neiger is chairman of the Publications comm for the same reason.

Calhamer Awards Comm

John Boyer has recently conducted two polls after a very long period of inactivity of this comm. It appears that henceforth we will just vote rather than discuss (though there was about two pages of discussion in the last issue of the comm newsletter). The number of categories has been cut down, but comm members still insist (8-1) on international awards. This is a good example of short-sightedness. How can a German-, French-, or Italian- language zine, for example, win a CA, no matter how good it is, when most of the people choosing CA winners, whether panel or otherwise, won't even be able to read the language! This is a manifestation I was afraid of--naturally a comm to reform the CA is "packed" with non-critics for the most part--extreme critics (myself excepted) aren't likely to want to be on a comm to reform what they think ought to be abolished, so strong supporters inevitably form a majority. Despite the results of the NADPS questions about the CA, which indicated preference with regional awards, internationals get the short-sighted nod.

There will be a CA Comm meeting at DipCon. I hope it won't decide anything, since probably not more than half of us can make it, but I haven't heard yet how binding it will be. The latest, and most stupid, suggestion to the comm is that the body choosing the CA winners meet to choose at the DipCon every year. Since almost all DipCon attendance comes from the surrounding region, and many qualified people cannot make DipCons at considerable distance, this means that the so-called international awards will be chosen by a regional group. I hope this suggestion is disposed of.

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?--THE GAMES

73Adi

Sigh. Harley Jordan returned home from vacation and found a note I'd sent him about some GMing errors, but no BI #501. Since this happened very late (in fact, I got the card after the deadline), we'll have to hold things up. However, as soon as I get the removals from Harley I'll send out results (one of the advantages of carbon copy). The errors were: Ber is still owned by Cleaveland; Jordan Nth-Hol and Nwg-Nth succeed; the number of centers owned is the same, though Hol and Ber are in different hands.

74Mfs

Margaret Gemignani is cutting down the number of games she is in and has resigned. I don't have an immediate replacement available, but John Baker just joined an ME V game in Turnabout and I was wondering. How about it, John? If nothing else, you pick up the position deposit if you hang in to the end. And it's not a bad position. (Men of the North).

73Et Winter 3007

Margaret Gemignani has resigned. I haven't any idea whom I could use as a replacement, and unless someone comes up with something, and until further notice, Rhevanion will go into Civil Disorder. Rhevanion: CM (E) A Gla, A Carr, retreating A Gund Gondor (Cooper) (E) A Emyr Mordor (Barents) (E) A Gor, A Barad Arnor (Dick?) NBR! Three short.

74ABfj-Spring 1904

ENGLAND (Baker) F Den-Swe, F Hel-Kie, LA Swe-Pin, F Edi-Mwg, F Lon-Nth, 1 invisible.

AUSTRIA (Schuetz) LA Tri (H) (D Vie, oth), 1 invisible

FRANCE (Rich) F Nth-Hol, F Mar-Spasc, A Bel (S) Nth-Hol, A Ruh (S)

ENGLISH F Hel-Kie, LA Mun (S) ENG F Hel-Kie, A Par-Bur, 1 invisible

GERMANY (Cleaveland) LA Ber (S) Kie, A Kie (S) Hol, F Hol (S) Kie (D, A)

ITALY (Schoenberger) LP Ion (H), A Tyr and A Ven (S) AUSTRIAN A Tri, 1 invisible

RUSSIA (Dziurzynski) LP Both-Liv, A StP (H), F Bal (S) GERMAN A Kie, A Bud (S) TURK A Alb-Tri, A Ukr-Rum, 1 invisible

TURKEY (Cooper) A Alb-Tri, A Ser and F Adr (S) A Alb-Tri, A Gre (S) A Ser, F Aeg (S) A Gre, F Smy (S) F Aeg, 1 invisible (and obvious from the adjudication, which is correct).

74Bez-Winter 5005

48(Cooper) Last time, 2P 39a-46 and 2P 34a-38a should have been underlined, but since I noted the dislodgement no harm was done. F 7 (R) Void 2. 2P 39a and 2P 34a (R) 36. Jim also attempted to build an IC in 10, not knowing whether he owned it. Upon checking I find that he did not, but since it is my fault that he didn't know, I'll give him the option of building an IC in 9 if he wishes (orders can be made conditional on whether he does). It makes very little difference at this point...

50 (Bynon) (B) 4F 50, 2P 49, Trade 440 with 51. 114 to build less 44-70, Tr=534

51 (Cleaveland) (B) 4F 51, 2P 30b, trade 440 with 50. =70, Tr=732 (note tr last time should have been 802, not 822)

DEADLINES

Now that we're going to carbon copy, deadlines can be more flexible at times. Specifically, we'll be using "sliding deadlines". If everyone gets in moves before the deadline and no one asks me to wait until the deadline (say, they might change moves), I'll adjudicate as soon as I have all the moves and send out results. The games will move faster this way. So, using sliding deadlines, the deadline on which I'll adjudicate whether I have everyone's moves or not is August 23 at Bellevue. Very soon thereafter my address will change to (temporarily) Room 120 Graduate Center, Duke U., Durham, NC 27706.

A Postal Tournament

John Baker has taken up the idea originally proposed by Paul Boymel in Diplomacy World #1 and elaborated on it. He is administering a postal tournament of three rounds to be played under those publishers who agree to the rules of the tournament. It will resemble in some respects the "tournament" being overseen (if my memory is correct) by Don Horton, in which seven publishers designate one of their games as part of the Publishers Tournament, and the winners play later. But there are entry fees and prizes in John's tournament, and the structure is more organized. If you want to know what it's all about, read a reprint of John's zine somewhere (I haven't seen it reprinted yet), or ask him for a copy of Prometheus (General Delivery, Gradyville, KY 42742).

I must admit that I see no reason to have three rounds in a postal tourney, nor even two, since players can participate in more than one game at the same time. For some reason postal tournament proposals have always followed PTF tournament lines. More on this in an article someday....

This is the largest issue of BI ever published, which is my excuse for taking a week to do it. As it is, I will have to cut out some things I intended to put in. The following is part of a letter I wrote in reply to some remarks Gordon Anderson made in the April issue of his Viking Newsletter about the "subsidy", really not that at all, which the IDA voted in connection with my variant package. There is also a part about my job as Central Region Secretary which I'll leave out now. Mr. Anderson proudly claims that he gives those he criticizes opportunity to defend themselves; I hope that he will get around to printing my letter in full (it is in the correct format for printing) in his publication. I have not seen a VN since the April issue, though I am supposed to be trading with Anderson.

Now concerning the so-called "subsidy": The action concerns a Fantasy and Science Fiction Variant Package I intend to sell (not "some games"). IDA will reimburse me for a 50% discount I give to IDA members, in the same amount. I DO NOT MAKE A CENT. My print run is set (as I have already told Mr. Anderson), and was set last winter when I started offset printing of some of the variants. The amount is 400, by the way, a number I cannot expect to sell soon even though I will sell to many non-postal players who are SF&F Gaming fans. I was forced to print so many in order to keep the cost of each copy reasonable. But in 5 years, or however long it takes, I will sell the same number of packages, and receive the same amount, with the IDA action as I would have without it. I reiterate, I DO NOT MAKE A CENT. All I get is hassle in keeping track of the separate IDA accounts, and trouble from ignorant persons and persons who have dollar signs on either side of their noses instead of eyes.

I proposed the possibility of action (no one else on the Council even knew of the package, I think). I did not recommend or disrecommend it. There was never any question of whether I would vote or not; it never came up from anyone but myself. While I am sure it would have been constitutional for me to vote in the matter, I disqualified myself. Mr. Anderson lies when he says I "was not allowed to vote", information which I'm sure he could have obtained accurately from the Council Courier or from Diplomacy Review. It cannot be assumed that I would have voted for it. It is amazing that I am listed as having voted for it when, as I have said and as Mr. Anderson must have known, I disqualified myself. It is not unknown for me to present an idea for consideration by others which I do not particularly care for myself, but which others might be interested in. Some of the questions on the North American Diplomacy Players Surveys, and my comments in the results, are indicative of this.

(The following four paragraphs are included in letters to R. Lipton and G. Anderson.) The Editor salary and "subsidies" are not comparable. My opposition to the salary is simply economic--if the past Council had approved of the suggestion to have two editors, so that the work would be split between them, then the problem of an overburdened editor would have been avoided without additional outlay of funds. \$100 is a huge chunk of IDA funds. I do not want the editorship to become a ripe plum which hobbyists try for because of the money involved. Moreover, giving the editor \$100 a year will not in one whit reduce his work load (no one thinks he'll use that money to hire a secretary or something like that, even if such is practicable), so the problem of having an overburdened editor remains.

Now considering the problem of "subsidies", however you wish to define it, I wish to make a few comments. There are two possible purposes for such an action by the Council. First, it may offer an advantage to IDA members, in terms of a discount or in terms of making something available which would not otherwise be available. I do not know why the IDA Council chose to vote for the Variant Package action. Perhaps they wished to do something for the variants aspect of the hobby. Second, such an action may be agreed to by the Council in order to advance the hobby in some way. The thought concerning the Diplomacy World subsidy was, I suspect, that such a zine was needed and no one else was in a position to, or capable of, accomplishing such a project without much greater financial support than IDA was willing or able to give. In this way the DW action involved both purposes of the "subsidy". This is the rationale behind IDA's contributions to the Boardman and Miller Number Custodians and to the Orphan Games Director. Despite the complaints from a vociferous few, the DW subsidy was strongly approved by the members according to the IDA poll.

I think that any charges that "subsidies" go only to IDA buddies or some such idiocy are overthrown by the Council vote to offer a tremendous sum (\$100) to this year's DipCon, that is to Gordon Anderson. I don't need to say how strongly Anderson opposes some of the Council's activities. For that matter, do I need to tell you how strongly I oppose many of the Council's activities? I was the only member to vote against the election fiasco bill. I have voted yes on fewer bills than any other Council member. I am hardly the darling of the Council, as anyone who receives Council Courier knows, and as anyone who has read DR for the past year knows.

Although I do not oppose subsidies per se, I do oppose huge allocations of IDA funds. \$100 is perhaps 20-25% of IDA's annual income. Spending such a sum must be very seriously considered from all angles.

I have attempted to be brief. I hope Mr. Anderson will see fit to publish this letter in full. One must be prepared to defend or correct what one charges in print.

Sincerely,

/signed/

Lewis Pulsipher

As I said up front, so far as I know this letter (and this is not quite all of it) has not been printed by Mr. Anderson. The date of the letter is May 22, by the way.

Before I heard any complaints about the Council action, I proposed that IDA take a referendum on the VP question (in accordance with my own recommendation concerning "subsidies" in a letter printed in the Mar-Apr DR). The Council unanimously voted this down (I disqualified myself). In fact, Steve Brooks accused me of not wanting to give IDA members a break, if you can believe such stupidity.

Someone pointed out that increased speed of sales might make proceeds from sales available to me more quickly than otherwise, so that the subsidy would indirectly increase my intake through the interest earned. However, I expect that no more than 5 people will buy the VP at 50¢ less than would buy it anyway--such things are usually yes or no whenever the price is halfway reasonable. Considering the problems of the "subsidy", postage, records, etc., I think in the end there will be no difference in intake.

I also sent a letter to Robert Lipton about some remarks he made. Since this was published in his zine, I'll save the room here.

CHAIN RATTLING

Three pages is certainly inadequate to try to explain why I do some of the things I do in this hobby--especially working from notes without a first draft. But I'll try.

I have been called at various times in the past few years a "flaming asshole", "son of a bitch", "contrary", I have been told to "go take a flying fuck at a rolling doughnut", and I have been told that someone was beginning to hate my guts (by the person himself, that is). I am speaking of wargamers and Diplomacy players, not of others. Of course, some of this comes from people who are, we all agree, absolutely hopeless--for example, Steve Cole. But not everyone who makes such remarks can be immediately dismissed. I draw this kind of fire sometimes because I am not content to sit by no matter what kind of foolishness, suckering, or fraud is going on in this hobby. I've found that, often, it is necessary to figuratively punch someone in the nose in order to wake him up, even when it would be to his benefit (if he tried it) to wake up. Perhaps a better metaphor would be that one must rattle chains next to his ear, or if necessary to bash the sleeper over the head with them. This is not calculated to endear one to the people getting bashed. That is one of the penalties involved, and I have always been willing to incur it, at least in gaming. It is the easiest thing in the world to avoid controversy, even to be considered a "nice guy"--just don't do anything. Even Walt Buchanan, who tries harder than anyone I know or to be nice to everyone, has made enemies because that is unavoidable if one wishes to accomplish anything worthwhile. No matter what you believe, if you take a stand there will be people who violently disagree with you. And while I generally assume a person is honest, well-meaning, etc when I first run across him (a naive notion perhaps the result of an almost-rural upbringing?), I also have found that many of the people in the world, and even many in the hobby, are shithheads.

The question I have been asked more than once, and which I am attempting to answer here, is why do I bother--why don't I just not do anything except play games, design games, innocuous pastimes like that. First, I'm interested in why people tick, and in our context, in why people go into the "administrative", the non-playing aspects of the hobby. Perhaps if I had been exposed to it sooner, I would have gone into psychology-psychiatry, and while I have no formal training worth speaking of, amateur speculation always interests me. For example, why does Walt Buchanan spend his time doing DW, why does John Beshara spend so much time helping novices, why was Rod Walker so involved a few years back? Naturally I ask these questions about myself, too. At any rate, it is impossible to indulge this interest without getting involved with the people who do these things.

Second, for some reason I hate inaccuracy. Perhaps the historian in me reacts. I especially hate hypocrisy. I suppose you could say that I am disgusted by dishonesty. I am helpless to explain that except for the inadequate statement that I grew up in a family and environment which, by its contrast with the more seedy side of the world, instilled this attitude.

Third, for reasons unknown to me, I find that I have a tendency to defend someone who is attacked or criticized if the person is not present to defend himself. Perhaps I empathize with the "victim". This attitude extends sometimes to defending persons or groups of people who are being unfairly attacked or taken advantage of.

Fourth, I am a very direct person, really unsuited to be a Dippy player at all. I say what I mean, at least I try to; too often, I think, so-called "tact" is really confusing or cowardly, as well as likely to be misunderstood even when it is not one of these. If you won't say what you really mean, then keep your mouth shut.

Probably the most important factor involved here is a sense of fairness and objectivity. I try to judge each person by a fair standard, on his own merits; judging people all by the same standard can lead to misapprehension, but I try to do so as well as I can without being rigid. I strive to judge each work or activity on its own merits. The goal is to lift oneself outside of one's narrow personal view. I suppose this is the historian's attitude, more than anything else. It's an attitude we could use much more of in Dippydom, I'm afraid. Too many hobbyists, especially those who are most active "politically", tend to view every activity with the idea of "what's in it for me" or "is it associated with so-and-so (whom I dislike), would it help him". I see no reason to excuse an action because it was a friend who did it rather than an enemy.

If one says that I am too hard on people, expect too much of them, I have two replies. First, every person ought to have the self-discipline and foresight to recognize what he's getting into and what will be required of him when he starts something. Second, I never expect anything of anyone that I don't expect of myself. You may not consider these good reasons, but they're good enough for me.

All the above impels me to ACT rather than to remain passive, to participate rather than let things go by. There are two ways to treat a problem; first, ignore it and hope it goes away; second, clean it up, treat the disease. In this hobby, it is very difficult for me to hope that the problems will go away. I would not really feel that I was a member of this hobby if I sat by and let others do what, in my perception, NEEDS to be done. In a sense I am driven, but I suppose that is true of everyone in one way or another.

Other things enter in, of course. I like to do as much as I can to control my environment. No doubt I find an avenue for whatever aggressive and sadistic streaks I have in exposing idiocy and idiots. The characteristics mentioned in above paragraphs are more pronounced in my hobby personality than in general, because, of course, it is possible to expend the necessary energy in a small part of life (this hobby) in a way that would be impossible in life as a whole. This sometimes fools people--for example, John Boyer once said that he thought I was quite extroverted, whereas actually I am very introverted, though even an introvert can become somewhat outgoing with people he knows well. I have been told that I have a poor sense of humor, but that arises from the limitations of the written word and from the type of sense of humor I have--very careful, not sadistic (I hope), and based on fairly deep knowledge of whatever person I am trying to get to laugh. And the fact that I am a literal person can lead to misinterpretation.

No doubt I occasionally sound self-righteous. This may in fact be the case, who knows, but it may be part of the effect, to wake the sleepers; and it must be admitted that it is difficult to come out and say, "this person is wrong" or "this guy is a crook" without sometimes sounding self-righteous.

Some people comment that I am always, or mostly, negative. This is definitely not true, but negative comments are always more visible than positive comments, and I am not given to patting people on the

back (nor do I expect it myself). Nor do I often go about broadcasting that I support this or that. But if you look around you'll notice that I support Diplomacy World, Midwest Gaming Association (though there is not much of a formal organization left, there), variants, SF & F games (I've published about as many pages of Supernova as of BI), surveys, better treatment of players with respect to orphans (I was the one who suggested formation of the MGA (then MOW) GM group for mutual guarantees of games, which has led to DNYMPA, CDGO, and other regional guarantee groups). I favor a hobby-wide Diporg, and I favored IDA while there seemed to be the likelihood that it could become such an organization. I favor eliminating ignorance wherever this can be done. Finally, consider that it is the critic, the constructive critic, who stimulates the changes that improve any activity; often the strongest supporters of an activity are in some respects critical of it, because they think it can be better; in a way a constructive critic is an idealist, but this does not necessarily mean that he is impractical.

Edi Birsan likes to talk about "commentators", people who ought to be ignored, apparently, unless they are working on whatever activity they make a suggestion about--in other words, almost everyone is a "commentator". I utterly reject this mystical notion--it is quite possible for someone to have a good idea without actually taking part in a project. But perhaps there are commentators in one sense, people who make suggestions--almost always poor or destructive ones--but who never do anything themselves. I do not think that anyone can be called a "commentator" if he is doing useful work himself, even if it is on another project. Naturally a person directly involved is likely to have a better idea of what is going on, but others can understand what is happening, too, even though they are not directly involved.

Now getting around to IDA, I have a few comments to make. From the first, one of the problems with the Council has been sheer inactivity. The members were, before this year and even now, too damn lazy to do much. Almost anything was more important to them than IDA before they became Council members, and the attitude continued after they became CM. This was especially true last year, when almost half the Council more or less dropped out and others often missed votes. As a private member, there was a limit to how much I could do to change this. Letters to the editor can only have a small effect on short run activity, though they have more influence (I hope) in the long run. No matter how much a private member agitates or rattles the chains in attempts to wake up officers (and I did so for three years), so long as he is a private member (and consequently he is not considered significant by the Council--he's automatically a "commentator") he must fail. I hope that my chain rattling at the time helped make the present Council more aware of what they would be getting into and of what they needed to do. I begin to doubt that now, though.

At any rate, with a trip to Britain likely in 1976-77 I decided that I would have to run for office in 1975 in order to try to stimulate some changes from the inside before I was out of things altogether. I fear I have failed, but I have done my best. I have also tried to act as unofficial Ombudsman in the Scandinavian sense, as someone who observes the government and who attempts to represent those who have no voice of their own in the government. So long as I feel that I can do some good, I'll stay on the Council, but the time seems to be approaching when my ability to alter the downward course we seem to have adopted will be nil.

I don't know just what her withdrawal means, except that you certainly can't use her name henceforth (and if you do, it would as logically be an issue for the IDA Judicial Committee as some of the stuff already in front of same). My own suggestion is that you drop the things and don't even bother to report results. I still know of no one but yourself who cares for the awards, though I suppose there must be more somewhere.

-- Beware of creeping Budism! Dudduddudduddudduddudddd --

Dave Kadlecak, in Speculum, has openings for many variants, among them Middle Earth VII (\$1 plus sub), Gigaton Bomb (\$2 plus sub), and Youngstown Variant (\$2 plus sub). Sub is 10/\$2, 1447 Sierra Creek Way, San Jose, Calif 95132.

IS REPRINTING WITHOUT PERMISSION ETHICAL?

Rod Walker and TDA have been in a go-round about various aspects of the above question, and IDA has become involved. Walker reprinted TDA's "A Rating Survey", which is a listing of players and ratings resembling the Averaged Calhamer Point Count, and using a rating base devised by TDA rather than adopted from the Postal Diplomacy Rating Commission. The article has been printed in a number of zines, with permission of TDA; it includes a copyright notice. Eric Verheiden asked the IDA Council to reprimand Walker and make him apologize, or failing to accomplish that, to replace him as IDA Ombudsman. Foolishly enough (for many reasons), this was taken to the IDA Judicial Committee. (Verheiden is a member of the TDA Board of Directors, so the copyright was part his, and he is acting in his own right--TDA is not directly involved. At least, that is what I have been told.)

Walker claims that TDA is wrong to copyright the material, that the hobby tradition is freedom of the press and freedom of information exchange. At present in the IDA Judicial Committee, Edi Birsan and others are attempting to show that the copyright is not effective or that what Walker did was "fair use" under the law, and so permissible. On this ground Birsan has, in his usual manner, attempted to throw the question under the rug and hope that it will go away, rather than solve it completely now and establish a precedent. Whether the copyright is legally binding is IRRELEVANT. The question is, ought we to condone the reprinting of material that was clearly not intended for reprint without permission? This has NEVER been the tradition of the hobby, at least not since I've been in it (1969). It has always been customary to ask for reprint permission, even of articles which were not copyrighted. While I sympathize with Walker's concern with being accurate in his criticism (it is more fair to the party being criticized if you can reprint exactly what they say, though it is difficult to apply that criterion because so much would have to be printed in most cases), I cannot agree with what he has done. I think he is more interested in attacking TDA and John Beshara than in attacking the copyright. Hobby zines have been copyrighted for years--I used to do so with BI, Paul Wood and John Van De Graaf do so with Yggdrasil Chronicle, other publishers do, and IDA itself copyrights its Dippy Handbooks. Where was Walker all this time?

Some other points. What Walker does is Walker's business. IDA should never have been drawn into this, and I expressed this position immediately to Verheiden and to the IDA Council. Since Walker is chairman of the Judicial committee, and there is considerable dispute about just who is a member of the JC, that committee was hardly in a

condition to make a judgement anyway. Walker's actions as Walker are separate from his position as Ombudsman. Only if Walker did something heinous, so bad that it would seriously affect his ability to act as Ombudsman, would the IDA Council have any reason to become involved. The Judicial Committee ought not to be a kangaroo court for trying all sorts of personal disputes, either, but that seems to be what it is becoming.

If you would like to see my view as expressed before this incident occurred, see my columns in Diplomacy World (4 or 5, I think) where I mention someone who reprinted EARTHSEA DIPLOMACY without permission (as it turned out, this was misunderstanding growing from negligence, or perhaps sloppiness would be a better word, of the publisher).

Even if I do not include a copyright notice on some material I write, I would probably be very annoyed (an understatement) if someone reprinted anything I had done without permission, unless it was clearly for a perfectly harmless purpose. In this case, the reprinting was done with intent to criticize--hardly harmless from the viewpoint of the TDA people involved.

NOTE: I speak as a member of the hobby, not as an IDA officer. Also, I am not a member of TDA, nor do I have plans to become one. Walker is a member of TDA, though I'm not sure that that is relevant.

I want to repeat that I am especially disgusted at those who wish to sweep this question under the rug by ignoring the basic issue, and instead by concentrating on the effectiveness of the copyright. There is a bill before the Judicial Committee (put unilaterally by Edi Birsan, rather than by the chairman (though in this case Walker may have transferred chairmanship to Birsan, though he had not done so earlier in the dispute)) to end the affair because the legality of the copyright is in question; the proposed bill rejects any idea of sanctions (an idea I reject also) because the copyright is not clear, without consideration of the ethical question involved. The question should never have come before the JC in the first place, but once it did, it should have been dealt with thoroughly and fairly; it has not been, if this committee bill goes through.

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Hey, Edi, I'm not running for anything next year, and while I'm not much respected in some parts, I'm willing to be vote counter for IDA elections if Beyerlein won't or is unacceptable in some quarters.

((((( )))))

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